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ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with the following topics on adult student attendance at Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) during the 1969-70 academic year: student background, reason for attendance, enrollment in programs or courses, academic success, evidence of perscnal and occupational development. The report is based on the useable questionnaire responses from 998 credit and non-credit adult students, as well as their college records. The students' evaluation of HACC grew from their expectations, motivations, and experiences at the college. It was found that two premises for continuing education for adults are: (1) the need for renewing one's employment skills and abilities several times throughout life; and (2) the need to continually develop one's awareness of environment in terms of society, culture, and natural and technological phenomena. Recommendations reducing barriers for extending adult education are: off-campus centers, non-credit courses, financial aids, flexible admissions procedures, public information, and course scheduling. (CA)

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THE ADULT STUDENT POPULATION

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APR 20 1971

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
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FOREWORD

When the College opened for classes in 1964, adult students were a rarity. However, by 1970, adult students on campus were commonplace. Just several years ago, adult students who interviewed for admission would often ask in a hushed tone of embarrassment, 'Will I be the only one?" Times have changed; just recently a sweet 19-year old H.A.C.C. coed asked, when introduced to one of the authors (now in his mid-30's), "Oh, do you attend H.A.C.C. too?", thus demonstrating a commonality and acceptance of older students. This study was conducted to help us "catch up" with the growing reality of adult student attendance, including concomitant motivations, goals, and special needs for services and procedures.

Many persons contributed to this study. A large number of faculty members and administrators participated in formulating the research questions around which the study was developed. Several staff members contributed heavily to the substance and readability of the final report: William Ferencz and James Hooker provided critical reactions to a draft of the report, Truman Eddy provided his usual excellent editing assistance, and Virginia Gross provided invaluable assistance with the procedures of conducting the study, preparing tabulations and illustrations, reviewing early drafts, and typing all copy for the report. The authors are grateful for each of these contributions.

CONTENTS

Section	Page
LIST OF TABLES	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
INTRODUCTION	1
Population	1
DESCRIPTION OF ADULT STUDENTS	2
Demographic Description	2
Academic Background	7
MOTIVATIONS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	8
Academic Programs and Credit Load	8
Reasons for Attending H.A.C.C.	10
Academic Performance	14
EVALUATION OF H.A.C.C.	14
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS	16
Summary	16
Implications and Recommendations	18
REFERENCES	21
APPENDIX	22
Questionnaire	23
Tables	25

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1.	Campus Location of Males and Females	25
2.	Age Distribution of Males and Females	25
3.	Activities of Full-Time Males Immediately Prior to Attending H.A.C.C., By Curricular Groups	26
4.	Dependent or Self-Supporting Status of Unmarried Males and Females	27
5.	Veterans Status of Males and Females	27
6.	Marital Status of Males and Females	28
7.	Number of Children of Married Men and Women	28
8.	Parents' Educational Level of Males and Females	29
9.	Current Occupational Status of Males and Females	30
10.	Salary of Males and Females Employed Full Time	31
11.	High School Rank in Class of Males and Females	32
12.	ACT Composite Scores of Males and Females	32
13.	Curricular Areas of Males and Females	33
14.	Matriculation Dates of Adult Students	34
15.	Number of Credits Carried During the Spring 1970 Semester by Males and Females	34
16.	Reasons Rated as Very Important by Males and Females for Attending H.A.C.C.	35
17.	Reasons Rated as Very Important for Attending H.A.C.C., by Full-Time Employment Status	36
18.	Rating of Satisfaction with Activities Immediately Prior to Attending H.A.C.C., by Full-Time Males	37

NOTE: Tables listed on this and the following page have been deleted from this report.

LIST OF TABLES (continued)

Table		Page
19.	Educational Goals of Males and Females	37
20.	Educational Goals by Age Groups	38
21.	Educational Goals of Veterans and Non-Veterans	38
22.	Current and Desired Occupational Level of Students	39
23.	Knowledge of Other Institutions in the Harrisburg Area To Pursue Educational Goals, by Curricular Groups	40
24.	Knowledge of Other Institutions in the Harrisburg Area To Pursue Educational Goals, by Veterans and Non-Veterans	41
25.	Cumulative Credits Completed Through the Spring 1970 Semester by Males and Females	41
26.	Cumulative Grade Point Average Earned Through the Spring 1970 Semester by Males and Females	42
27.	Ratings of Several Aspects of the Educational Program by Curricular Groups	43
28.	Rating of Personal College Work and Experiences at H.A.C.C. by Various Groups	45
29.	Expectations for Continuing at H.A.C.C. Beyond Spring 1970 by Males and Females	46
30.	Expectations for Continuing at H.A.C.C. Beyond Spring 1970 by Curricular Groups	47
31.	Recommendation of H.A.C.C.	48

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1.	Age Distribution of Men and Women Adult Students	3
2.	Parents' Levels of Education	4
3.	Occupational and Related Activities of Men and Women	5
4.	Salaries of Men and Women Who Were Employed Full Time	6
5.	High School Rank in Class for Men and Women	8
6.	Distribution of Men and Women in Several Curricular Areas	9
7.	Number of Credits Carried by Men and Women at the Time of the Study	10
8.	Reasons Rated by Men and Women as Very Important for Attending H.A.C.C.	11
9.	Present and Desired Occupational Levels Reported by Students Who Are Employed Full Time	13
10.	Ratings of Aspects of the Educational Program as Superior or Good	15

One of the major functions of the community college is to provide opportunity for adults to continue their education for a variety of purposes that reflect the desires of individuals and the needs of society. It has been estimated that adult students comprise about one-half of community college enrollments across the country (Medsker, 1960, 43-44). During the spring 1970 semester, about 1250 students of age 21 and over, comprising two-fifths of the total student body, were enrolled at the Harrisburg Area Community College. As it is expected that more and more adult students will attend H.A.C.C., we need to know more about them and their reasons for attending. This done, we can respond more appropriately to their educational needs. This study attempts to answer several questions about the attendance of adult students at H.A.C.C.:

1. What are their backgrounds?

2. Why do they attend?

3. Into what programs or courses do they enroll?

4. What are their academic successes?

5. What evidences of personal and occupational or career development exist?

Population

The population for this study included students who were 21 years of age or older as of December 31, 1969, and who were enrolled as credit students during the spring 1970 semester at the College campus or at one of five off-campus locations (Harrisburg Hospital, Harrisburg Polyclinic Hospital, Mechanicsburg Naval Supply Depot, Carlisle Army War College, and New Cumberland Army Depot). These students included virtually all of those who did not attend college immediately after high school or who had attended college previously. Usually, they have had some significant work or family experience as adults other than at school and college.

In addition to the credit students noted above, over 400 adult students were enrolled during the 1969-1970 year in one of several seminars, workshops, or institutes which were sponsored by the academic divisions of the College. These programs were developed for persons employed in businesses, State supervisory positions, hospitals, engineering and construction firms, and police agencies. Each program was designed for a specific occupational training objective, and none of

them included degree credit. Those who attended such programs were not included in this study, however, as most of the questions we desired to investigate would not apply to the occasional non-credit student. Thus, the reader must bear in mind that the findings of this study do not reflect experiences of those students who enrolled in occasional non-credit short courses.

Data for this study were collected from two sources, a mailed questionnaire and College records. Questionnaires were successfully mailed to 1231 adult students, and usable responses were received from 998, or 81 percent of those who received questionnaires. Information about the academic achievement of respondents was obtained from College records. Nearly 90 percent of the respondents were enrolled on the H.A.C.C. campus, and the remainder attended classes at off-campus locations (Table 1). The writers assume from the high response rate that the data for this study are representative for the entire adult student body.

This report is intended to be of value primarily to the staff at Harrisburg Area Community College and to other educators in the Harrisburg Tri-County area who are interested in continued education for adults. A copy of the questionnaire and extensive data tabulations are located in the Appendix. Some data and several figures are also included in the body of the report, however, to illustrate specific findings which the writers believe to be of unusual interest or significance.

Description of Adult Students

Demographic Description

Adult students at H.A.C.C. ranged upward in age to above 65 years. Nearly one-half were between the ages of 21 and 24, and two-thirds were under age 30. About one-fifth (over 200 students) were age 35 or older (Table 2). Seven-tenths of the adult students at H.A.C.C. were men and three-tenths were women. Figure 1 shows the comparative distributions of men and women students by age groups. Men were considerably younger than women. One-half of the men were age 24 or younger, but just three-tenths of the women were in this age group. One-third of the women students were age 35 or over.

Over three-fifths of the men enrolled as full-time students at H.A.C.C. immediately after military service, and under two-fifths enrolled after being employed full time (Table 3). The proportion of students enrolling from military service and from employment were essentially the same for students in career programs, transfer programs, and the developmental program.

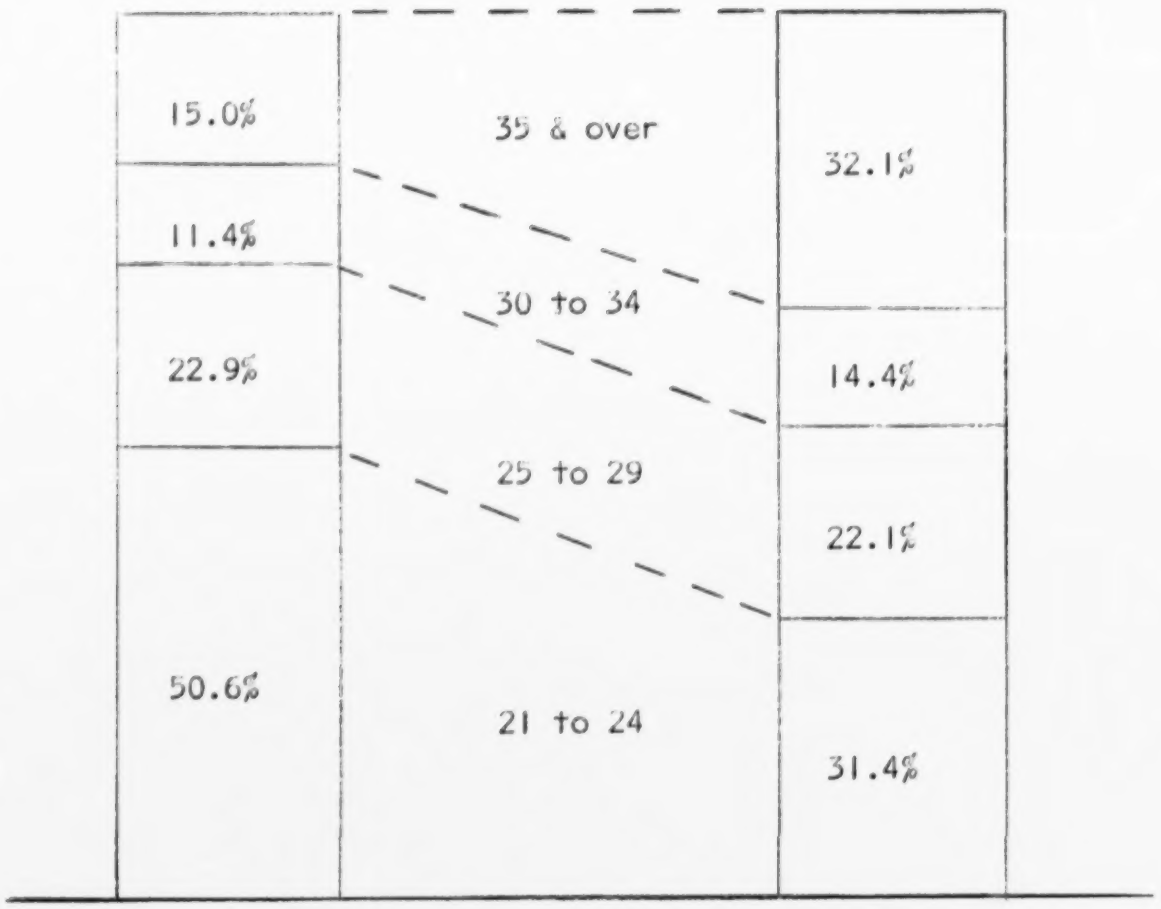

Figure 1. Age Distribution of Men and Women Adult Students.

Over eight-tenths of the adult students at H.A.C.C., both men and women, were self-supporting, rather than being dependent upon others for their personal expenses (Table 4). Over 300 men and 4 women were receiving educational benefits as veterans under the GI bill (Table 5).

About one-half of the adult students were married (Table 6). There was a notable difference in marital status between male and female students; less than one-half of the men, but over six-tenths of the women were or had been married. This finding is consistent with the younger ages of many of the men. Three-fourths of the married students reported having one child or more (Table 7). Nearly nine-tenths of the married women and seven-tenths of the men reported having children. From this, we observe that most of the married adult students at H.A.C.C. are sustaining normal family obligations in addition to pursuing programs of post-secondary education.

Parents' education. Adult students at H.A.C.C. are considerably better educated than their parents. Figure 2 shows that less than one-fifth of the parents of the adult students attended college, and under

one-tenth earned bachelor's degrees. At the lower extreme, two-fifths of the mothers and nearly one-half of the fathers failed to graduate from high school (see also Table 8). It is noteworthy that the educational level of parents of adult students at H.A.C.C. is lower than that for parents of the entire student body (Snyder and Blocker, 1969, p. 39). For a large proportion of these adult students, many of whom will earn an associate or higher degree, there is considerable improvement in educational level from that of their parents.

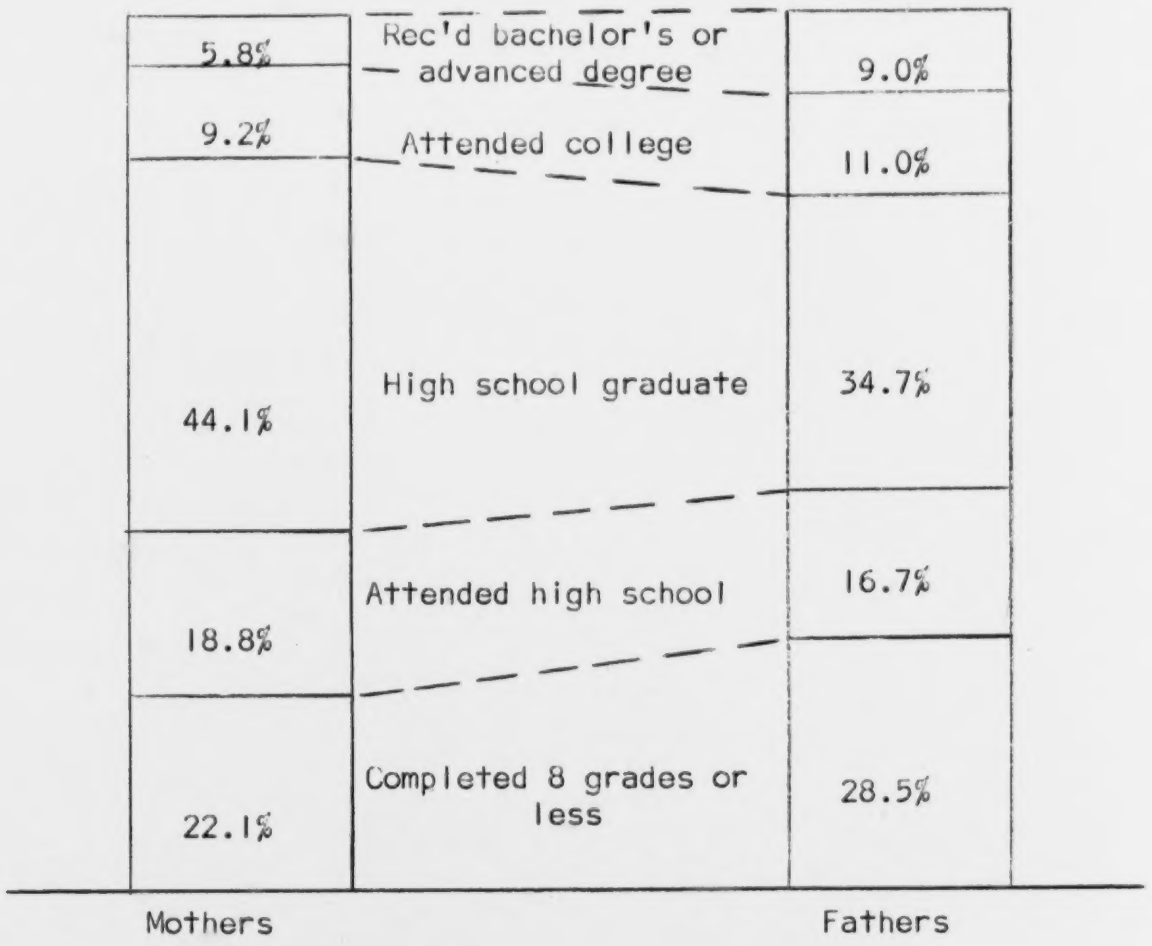

Figure 2. Parents' Levels of Education.

Occupational status. Adult students were asked to report information about their employment and other types of activities. Over half reported their primary activity as full-time employment, one-fifth as full-time students, and one-tenth as part-time employment (Table 9). One-third of the adult students were officially noted by the College as full-time students, since they were enrolled in 12 or more credits (Table 15). Eleven percent of the adult students worked full-time and carried a full-time academic load as well.

Figure 3 shows the occupational or related activities of men and women students. Men, more frequently than women, reported themselves

as being employed full time or as full-time students, but many of the women reported themselves as housewives. For men, three-fifths were employed full-time, and one-fifth were full-time students. Just under one-half of the women were employed full-time, one-fifth reported themselves as housewives, and one-tenth reported themselves as full-time students.

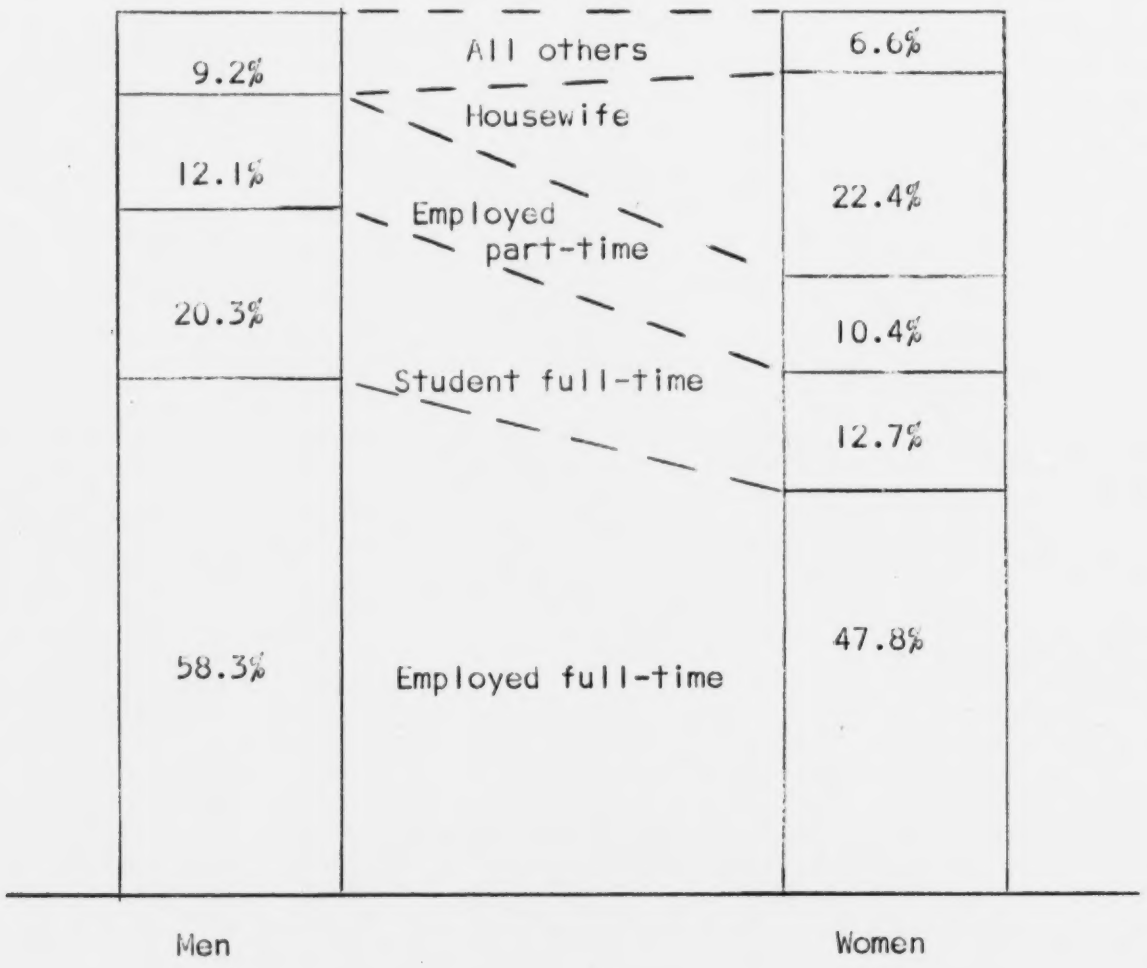

Figure 3. Occupational and Related Activities of Men and Women Adult Students.

Information concerning current salary was reported by 407 men and 142 women who were employed full time (Table 10). The average (median) salary for men and women students was $8050 and $6600, respectively. For men, salaries ranged up to $20,000 and over, and for women, up to $16,000. Figure 4 shows that the bulk of salaries for men lay between $6000 and $12,000, and for women, between $4000 and $9000.

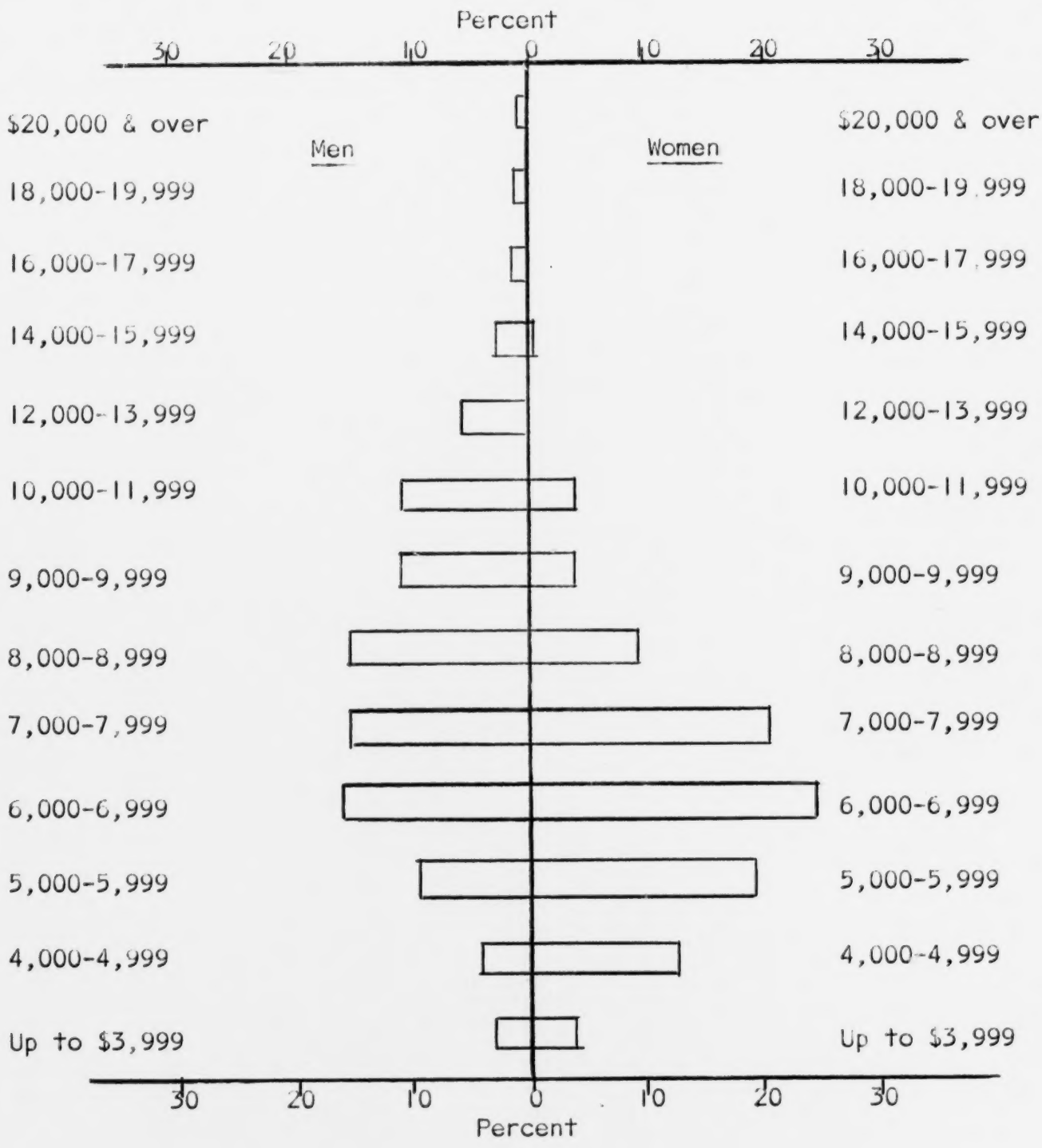

Figure 4. Salaries of Men and Women Students Who Were Employed Full Time.

These salary distributions suggest that a broad cross-section of occupational levels are represented by our adult students. Actual occupational levels reported by adult students who were employed full

time are shown in Table 22 and below.

Occupational Level	Percent
Clerical	23
Semiprofessional and technical	22
Managerial and office	19
Service	13
Professional	10
Skilled	8
Semiskilled and unskilled	4
Sales	2

Academic Background

Admissions procedures have allowed the adult student to begin his work without submitting the usual test scores and certain other information about his high school background. Such practice, although seemingly "loose," is justified by the outstanding academic performance of adult students at the College. As a result, however, academic background information is not as complete for adult students as for students who enroll at the College immediately following high school.

Achievement in high school by adult students was generally "average," based upon available information about high school rank-in-class, known for just under half of the adult students. About one-fifth of the adult students graduated in each of the quintile ranges beginning with the second fifth and continuing through the lowest fifth (Table 11). About one-tenth ranked in the upper fifth of their high school class. However, there is considerable difference in the high school achievement by men and women students, as noted in Figure 5. Whereas only one-fourth of the men graduated in the upper two-fifths of their high school class, over six-tenths of the women did so. One-half of the men, but only one-seventh of the women, graduated in the lower two-fifths of their class.

Adult students for whom ACT scores were available (one-fourth) earned an average 19.3 Composite score (Table 12), about the same as that obtained by the entire student body. Scores earned by men were considerably higher than those for women, 19.8 and 17.8, respectively. Compared to scores earned by all students at H.A.C.C. (ACT, 1969, p.5), adult men earned slightly higher scores and adult women earned lower scores than did younger students who enrolled directly from high school. Although adult women earned a higher rank-in-class in high school than did men, adult men earned higher ACT scores. This apparent contradiction is similar to the pattern found for younger students at H.A.C.C. and even nationally in non-selective institutions of higher education.

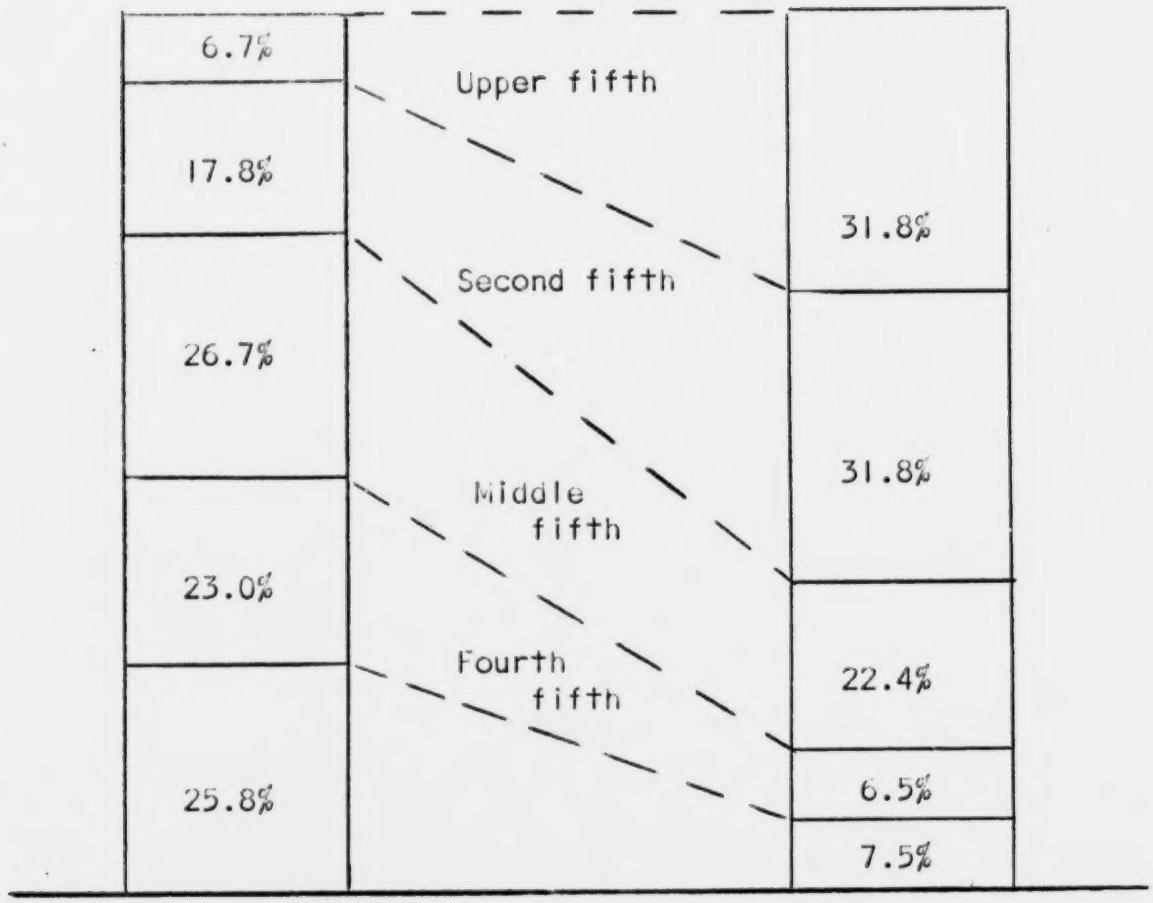

Figure 5. High School Rank in Class for Men and Women.

Motivations and Academic Performance

Academic Programs and Credit Load

Adult students were enrolled in a variety of academic programs at the College (Table 13). About three-tenths were enrolled in career programs which are designed to prepare the student for employment immediately upon receiving the associate degree, and nearly one-half were enrolled in programs which lead to transfer to a four-year college after earning the associate degree at H.A.C.C. One-sixth of the adult students were enrolled as special or guest students, two categories reserved for part-time students who do not intend to complete an existing program of study. Five percent were enrolled in the developmental program, which is designed to provide the student the opportunity to improve his readiness to do college work.

Several differences in curricular enrollments by men and women students are noted in Figure 6. Men were nearly twice as likely to enroll in a career program than were women, and women were twice as

likely to be enrolled as special or guest students. Proportionally, enrollments in transfer programs were about the same for men and women.

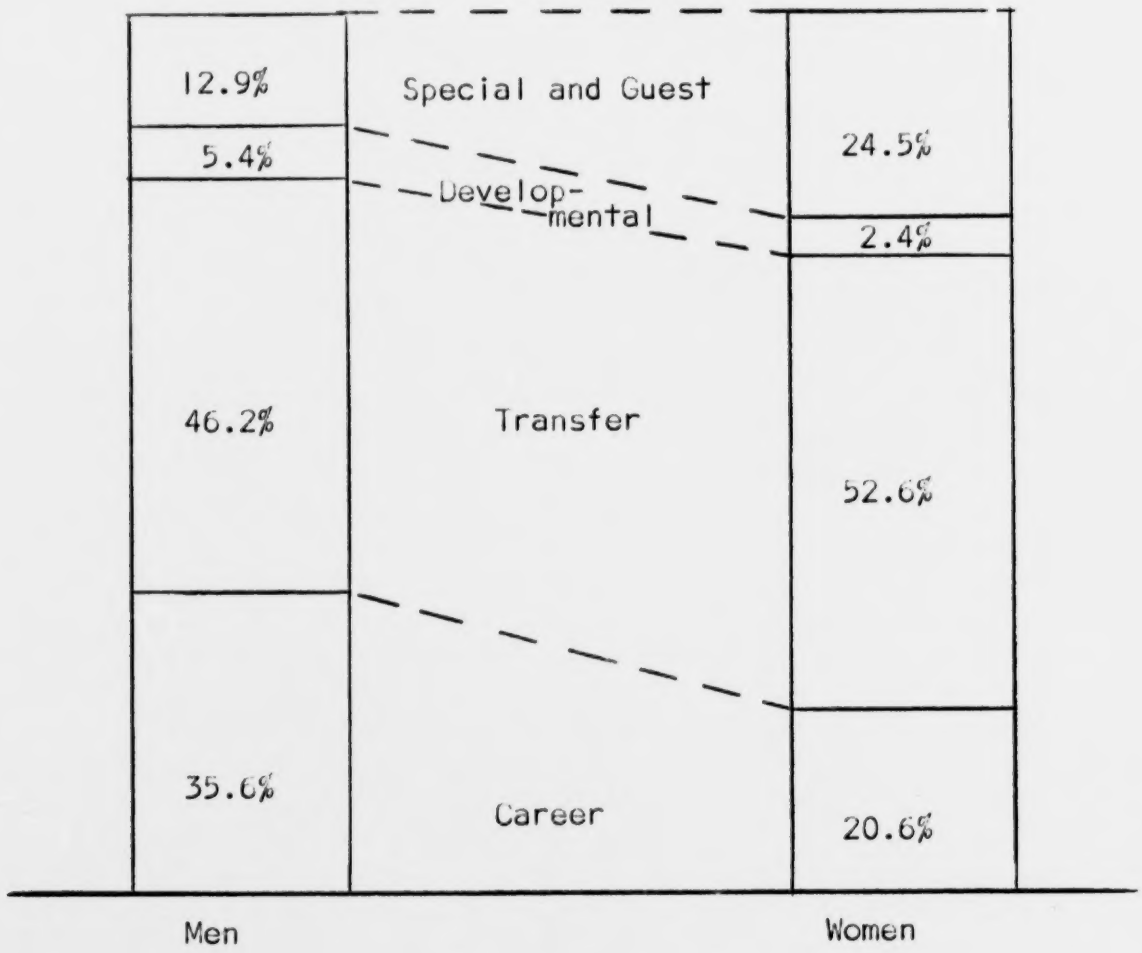

Figure 6. Distribution of Men and Women in Several Curricular Areas.

Adult students frequently carry part-time academic loads, and they may discontinue their attendance for any period and re-enroll at a later date. Therefore, it is not surprising to note that the date of first enrollment for some students extended back five years or more (Table 14). However, eight-tenths had been enrolled at the College for a two-year period or less.

At the time of the study, one-third of the adult students were carrying an academic load of 12 or more credits (4 or more courses), which qualified them officially as full-time students (Table 15). Usually, but not always, a college course involves three credits. An additional one-third were enrolled for up to three credits, one-fifth were enrolled in from four to six credits, and just over one-tenth were enrolled in from seven to eleven credits.

Figure 7 shows the distribution of credits carried by men and women students. Men were enrolled full time proportionally more than women. Just under two-fifths of the men and just over one-fourth of the women were enrolled full time. The average (median) credit load for men was 7.3, and for women, 4.3.

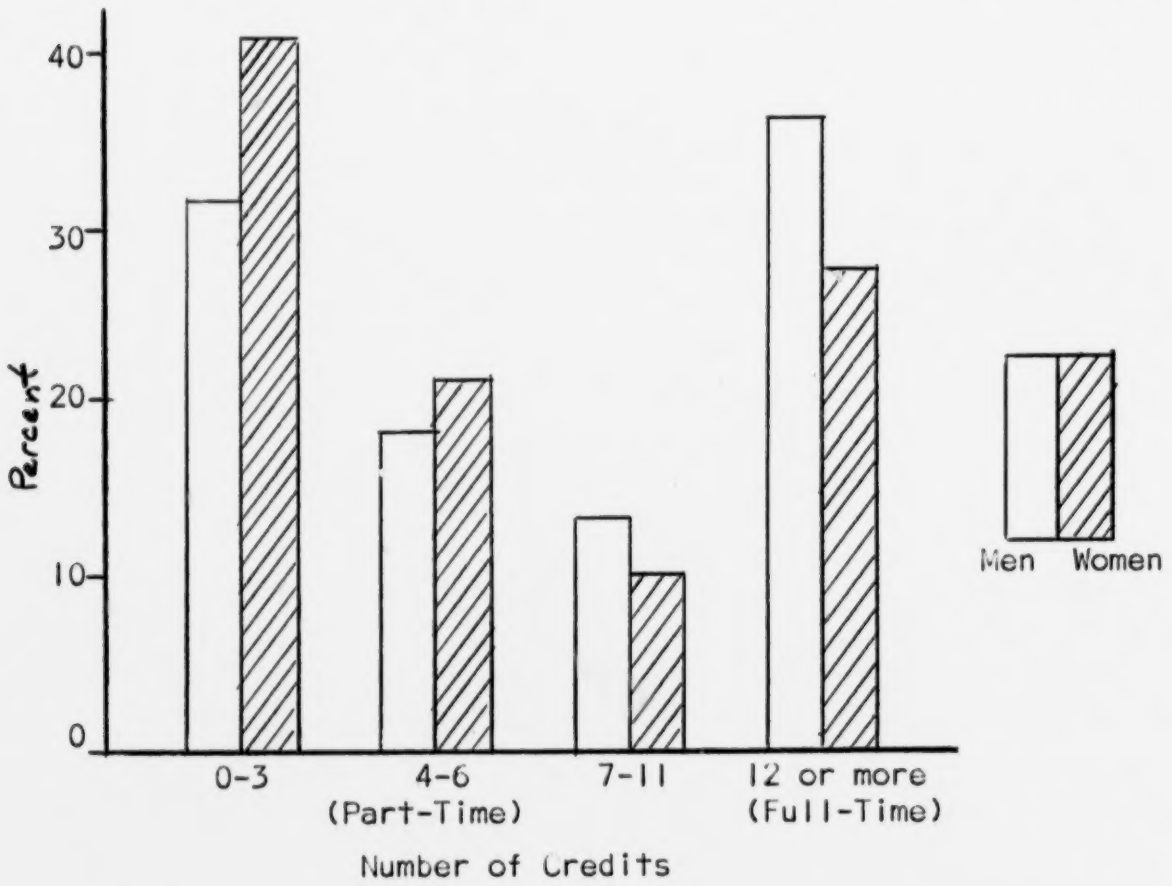

Figure 7. Number of Credits Carried by Men and Women at the Time of the Study.

Reasons for Attending H.A.C.C.

In our attempts to examine the motivations of adult students for attending H.A.C.C., several sources of information were used: reasons which they noted as important for attending the College; their reported satisfaction with their activities immediately prior to becoming full-time students at H.A.C.C.; the level of their educational goals listed in terms of earning the associate degree, certificate, or other specific learning objectives; comparison of their actual and desired occupational levels; and their knowledge of other institutions in the area in which they could have enrolled.

Respondents checked each of 12 reasons for attending H.A.C.C. as "very important," "of some importance," or "of little or no importance."

Figure 8 shows the reasons rated by men and women as "very important" for attending H.A.C.C., in order of importance (see also Table 16). Self-improvement was rated most frequently, followed by reasons of job preparation and continuing earlier college work. A series of social or pleasurable reasons were listed by a low percentage of the students. Men and women generally agreed, except that women rated social or pleasurable reasons slightly higher than did men. Similarly, students not employed full time rated social and pleasurable reasons higher than did students who were employed full time (Table 17).

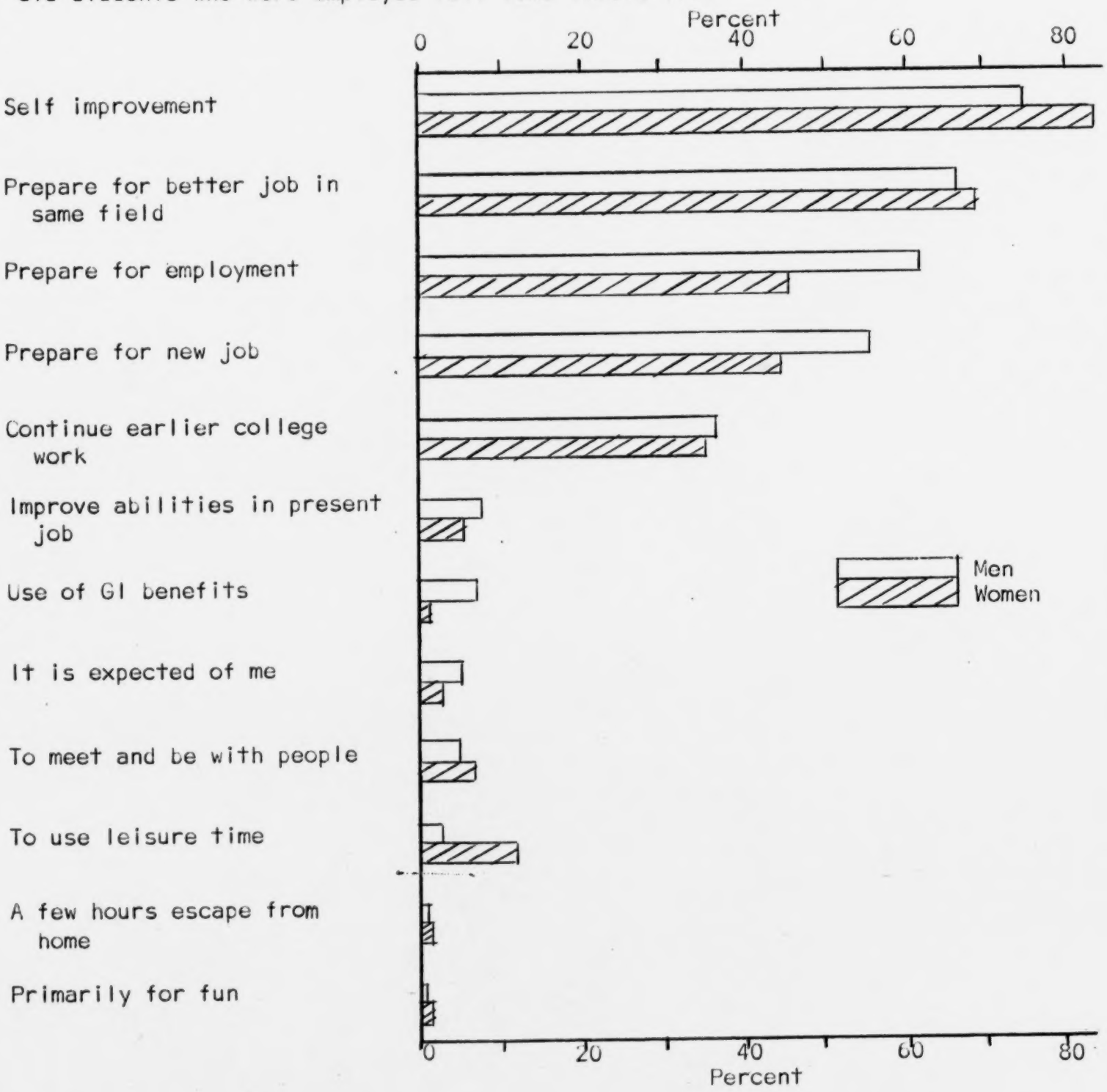

Figure 8. Reasons Rated by Men and Women as Very Important for Attending H.A.C.C.

Men who were enrolled as full-time students were also asked to indicate whether or not they were "satisfied" or "dissatisfied" with either their military service or employment, whichever occurred immediately prior to attending H.A.C.C. It was expected that their response would give some indication of whether students might be attending the College to extend upon a prior satisfactory experience or to move from a prior unsatisfactory experience. Over one-half of those who had been employed immediately prior to enrolling at H.A.C.C. reported dissatisfaction with their jobs (Table 18). This suggests that these students may view college enrollment as a way to improve their employment status, an idea that is supported by their occupational aspirations (Table 22). However, over eight-tenths of the students whose immediately-prior activity was military service expressed satisfaction with their military experiences. A conjectural explanation is that military service is viewed by students as a temporary interruption to their goals and was accepted as such, whereas prior employment is more central to self-concept in a way that leads to satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Students were asked to check their primary educational goal at H.A.C.C. The educational goals and proportions of respondents who indicated each are listed in Table 19 and in the following tabulation:

Goal	Percent
To earn associate or higher degree	82
To earn a certificate	7
For general education or self improvement	7
To clarify educational goals	2
To improve learning skills	2

Adult students at H.A.C.C. are highly oriented toward earning the associate degree or a higher degree. Perhaps this heavy emphasis by students on degree goals merely reflects the fact that our current educational programs are oriented toward a degree, rather than being designed for general education or more limited educational objectives for adult students. Older students were less oriented toward earning the associate degree than younger students (Table 20). Still, two-thirds of the students of age 35 and over were planning to earn a degree. They were somewhat more interested than younger students in earning a (one-year) certificate, in general education, and in improving learning skills. Men who were receiving GI benefits while attending the College were highly interested in earning the associate degree (Table 21); nearly nine-tenths of the veterans listed the associate degree as their primary goal.

The desire for occupational upgrading appears to be a major reason for adults' attending H.A.C.C. Figure 9 shows both present and desired occupational levels which were reported by adult students who were employed full time. The most frequently mentioned present occupational areas were clerical, semiprofessional and technical, and managerial and office, and these were each reported by about one-fifth of the students. However, over two-fifths of the students who were employed full time desired to

work in a professional job, and three-tenths in a managerial or office job. For all adult students, whether or not they were employed full time, one-half aspired to a professional job (Table 22).

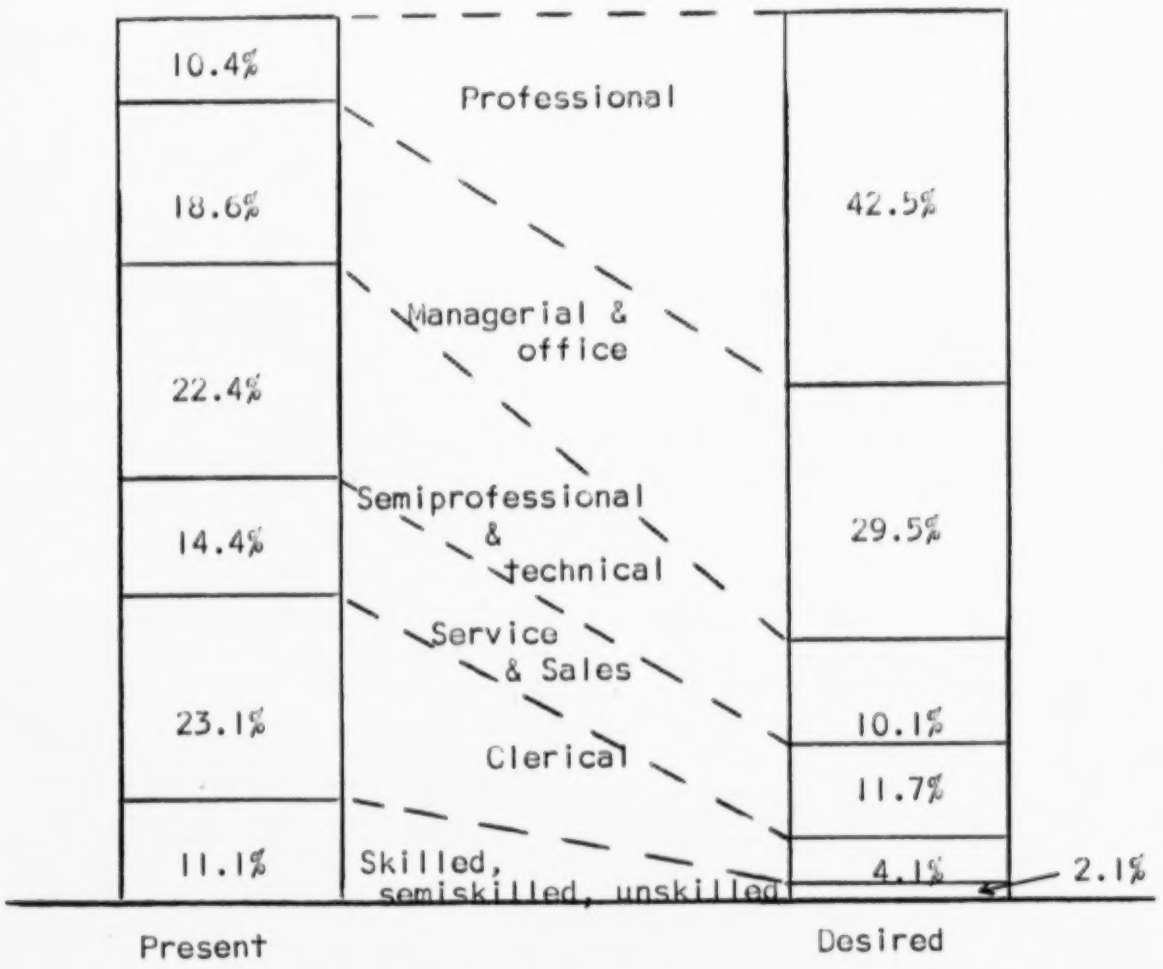

Figure 9. Present and Desired Occupational Levels Reported by Students Who Are Employed Full Time.

One source of motivation of adult students to attend the Community College may be the lack (perceived or real) of other institutions in the Harrisburg area which might offer them appropriate educational opportunities. Two-thirds of the students indicated that they did not know of another suitable college in the area offering the same program in which they were enrolled (Table 23). Students in curricular areas of engineering and education, and developmental students tended least to know of other area institutions which were suitable for them. However, half the students enrolled in special or guest programs (to take just one course or occasional courses) noted that there were alternative institutions which they could attend, although H.A.C.C. apparently offered best opportunity. Veterans, more than non-veterans, indicated that they knew of no other area institutions at which they could pursue their education (Table 24).

Academic Performance

The number of credits completed by adult students ranged up to more than 60 (Table 25). Men tended to complete more credits at H.A.C.C. than did women; the average number completed by the end of the spring 1970 semester was 20 and 15 for men and women, respectively. Over one-tenth of the adult students, or 110, expected to earn the associate degree at the end of the semester during which the data were collected (Table 29). It should be remembered that many adult students have completed college work at other institutions prior to their attendance at H.A.C.C., and up to 30 credits thus earned may be transferred toward an associate degree.

Adult students earned good grades at H.A.C.C. Nearly nine-tenths earned a cumulative grade point average of 2.00 (C average) or over (Table 26). The mean cumulative grade point average earned by adult students was 2.84 on a 4.00 scale, nearly a B average. This is a notably higher performance than that of the under-21 students. Overall, women earned a higher mean grade point average than men, 3.04 compared to 2.76.

Evaluation of H.A.C.C.

In the section just completed, we examined the educational motivations of adult students at H.A.C.C. This section examines four sources of these students' evaluations of the College. These evaluations presumably grow from the students' expectations and motivations, as well as their experiences at the College.

One approach to getting student evaluations of the College is to have them rate selected facilities or services which are offered. Those selected for rating included courses, generally; instruction, generally, the library; personal counseling; academic advisement; advisement in employment or transfer; student activities; and an overall rating. Students were asked to evaluate each as "superior," "good," "fair," "poor," and "cannot rate." Figure 10 shows the ratings of superior or good for each of the several aspects.

Courses, the library, and instruction were rated highest, and counseling, advisement, and student activities were rated notably lower. The rating percentages are based on the ratio of superior or good ratings to the total number of ratings, omitting "cannot rate" responses. Fewer than half the students rated the "advisement in employment or transfer" and "student activities" aspects (Table 27). Overall, the College was rated as superior or good by 85 percent of the adult students.

A few variations in the ratings by curricular groups can be noted (Table 27). These should be evaluated carefully by educators within the College who are responsible for specific curricular areas.

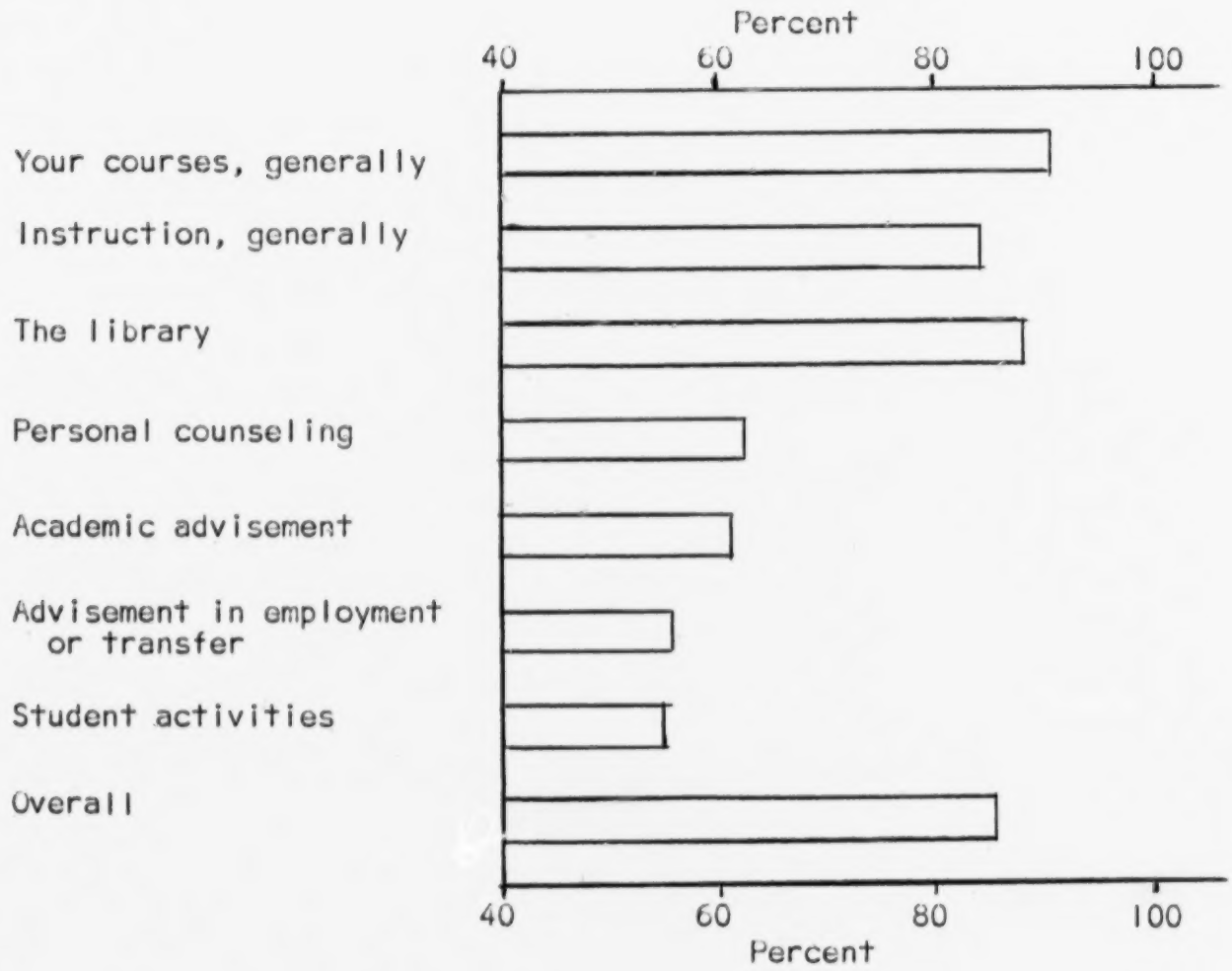

Figure 10. Ratings of Aspects of the Educational Program as Superior or Good.

Adult students were asked to rate their satisfaction with personal college work and experiences at H.A.C.C. as "superior," "good," "fair," or "poor." In all, 85 percent rated their personal experiences as either superior or good (Table 28). Women rated their experiences more favorably then did men. Students between the ages of 25 and 34 appeared to give slightly more favorable ratings than younger or older students. Among curricular groups, developmental students gave lowest ratings to their experiences, and students in the engineering and related technology areas gave somewhat lower ratings than other students. At least eight-tenths of the students at the several off-campus locations gave superior or good ratings.

More than nine-tenths of the students indicated that they expected to continue taking courses at the College, or that they expected to earn their degree during the spring 1970 semester (Table 29). These findings might be viewed as additional evidence that adult students are generally pleased with their experiences at the Community College. Among curricular

areas, students in career programs were most likely to expect to continue taking courses at the College. Special or guest students were somewhat less likely to plan to take additional courses (Table 20). There were some differences among students in the various transfer programs in the extent to which they planned to continue at the College; those in pre-education and in social science areas indicated somewhat less tendency to persist beyond the time of the study.

Adult students were asked if they would recommend H.A.C.C. to a person seeking to complete the same program or courses in which they had been enrolled. Overall, 96.5 percent answered "yes" to this question (Table 31). Few differences in these responses according to student characteristics were found. General agreement was found among men and women, single and married students, students at different age levels, students at the different campus and off-campus locations, and students in the various curricular areas.

In sum, adult students appeared overwhelmingly favorable toward their experiences at Harrisburg Area Community College. The most academic-oriented aspects of the College--courses, instruction, the library--were rated quite high. Personal experiences were given equally high ratings. A very large proportion of the students either expected to continue study at the College or graduate during the semester of the study. Nearly all would recommend their program of study to prospective students. However, careful examination of the findings reveals that certain student groups were less positive in some appraisals, and certain aspects of the College received less than firm approval.

Summary and Recommendations

Summary

The population for this study included students at the Harrisburg Area Community College who were 21 years of age or older and who were enrolled during the spring 1970 semester at the College campus and at five off-campus locations. Eighty-one percent of over 1200 adult students responded to a mailed questionnaire which provided data for this study. Information received from respondents was combined with that obtained from College master records to describe adult students according to demographic and academic characteristics, motivations, academic performance, and their evaluations of H.A.C.C.

Two-thirds of the adult students were between the ages of 21 and 30. Seven-tenths were men, and three-tenths were women. On the average, men were younger than women. Over three-fifths of the full-time men students enrolled immediately following military service, and nearly two-fifths enrolled following full-time employment. Less than one-half of the men and over six-tenths of the women were or had been married, and three-fourths of the married students reported having one child or more.

The educational level for parents of over-21 students was lower than that for parents of the entire student body. Nearly one-half of the mothers and fathers of adult students did not graduate from high school, and under one-tenth of the parents earned bachelor's degrees. Thus, we see a considerable improvement in educational level of these adult students beyond that of their parents.

One-third of the adult students were carrying an academic load of 12 or more credits (4 or more courses), which qualified them officially as full-time students. Over half of the adult students were employed full time during the spring 1970 semester, men reporting full-time jobs more frequently than women. Eleven percent of the adult students attending H.A.C.C. worked full time in addition to carrying a full-time academic load (12 or more credits). The median salaries for men and women who reported full-time jobs were $8050 and $6600, respectively.

There were considerable differences in high school achievement levels of men and women students; just one-fourth of the men compared to six-tenths of the women graduated in the upper two-fifths of their high school class. Overall, adult students earned "average" high school grades. The mean ACT composite scores earned by men and women were 19.8 and 17.8, respectively. Although adult women ranked higher than men in their high school class, men earned higher ACT scores, a pattern which is similar to that found for younger students at H.A.C.C. and nationally in non-selective institutions of higher education.

About three-tenths of the adult students enrolled in career programs designed to prepare for employment immediately upon receiving the associate degree, and one-half were enrolled in programs designed to prepare for transfer to a four-year college after earning the associate degree. Men were enrolled full time proportionally more than were women, and men were nearly twice as likely to enroll in a career program.

Self improvement and job preparation rated as the most important reasons for attending H.A.C.C. Over 80 percent of the respondents indicated their primary educational goal was to earn an associate or higher degree. Younger adults, and men receiving GI benefits, expressed a greater interest in earning the associate degree than did older students or non-veterans.

The desire for occupational upgrading appears to be a major reason why adults attend H.A.C.C. Over one-half of the men enrolled as full-time students who had been employed immediately prior to enrolling at H.A.C.C. expressed dissatisfaction with their jobs. Occupational areas most frequently reported by students who were employed full time were clerical, semiprofessional and technical, and managerial and office, each reported by about one-fifth of the students. However, over two-fifths of these students who were employed full time desired to work in a professional job, and three-tenths in a managerial or office job. One-half of all adult students, considering those not currently employed as well, aspired to a professional job.

It is also interesting to note that two-thirds of the adult students indicated they did not know of another suitable educational institution in the area offering the same program in which they were enrolled.

Over one-tenth of the students expected to earn the associate degree at the end of the spring 1970 semester. Men tended to have completed more credits than women; the average number for men was 20 and for women, 15. Adult students earned a mean cumulative grade point average of 2.84, which is notably higher than that earned by younger students. Women earned a higher mean grade point average than men, 3.04 compared to 2.76.

In evaluating aspects of the College facilities and services, students gave highest ratings to courses, the library, and instruction, and they gave notably lower ratings to counseling, advisement, and student activities. In all, 85 percent of the respondents rated their personal experiences at H.A.C.C. as superior or good. More than nine-tenths indicated they either expected to continue taking courses at the College or to earn a degree during the semester of the survey. As a final and overwhelmingly favorable evaluation of the College, over 96 percent said they would recommend H.A.C.C. to a person seeking to complete the same program or courses in which they had been enrolled.

Implications and Recommendations

Two premises for continuing education for adults can be noted: (1) the need for renewing one's employment skills and abilities several times throughout life, and (2) the need to develop continually one's awareness of environment in terms of society, culture, and natural and technological phenomena. In more philosophic terms:

> All individuals should have ample opportunity to develop themselves through education to the limits of their capacities. Committed to this concept, Harrisburg Area Community College seeks to provide the type of post-high school education which is essential for the maximum realization of each student's aspirations and abilities. (Harrisburg Area Community College Catalog, 1970-1971, p. 13).

Consistent with the two underlying premises for education of adults and the College philosophy, adults have been attending H.A.C.C., and some efforts have been made toward developing services which are particularly significant for older students. The adult students who have attended H.A.C.C. may be described as highly goal oriented, motivated to succeed, and possessing the problem-solving ability to overcome certain barriers to their college education. In contrast, a second type of adult student or potential student has been identified, who has some motivation to succeed, but often lacks specific goal orientation, and also lacks the ability to overcome problems or barriers.

The writers believe the College should accept the challenge of helping both types of student to obtain a "post-high school education which is essential for the maximum realization of each student's aspirations and abilities." Therefore, the following paragraphs contain several recommendations to "reduce barriers" to more extensive adult education at H.A.C.C.

Off-campus centers. The existing off-campus locations (except for the hospitals) are attended almost entirely by adult students who are "sponsored" by an employer agency. Additional centers in outlying areas such as central Perry County and upper Dauphin County, and in center Harrisburg and other areas may provide post-high school educational opportunity for a greater number of adult students.

Non-credit courses. To what extent and for what purposes does the College staff value educational goals which are non-degree oriented for adult students? We earlier noted that over 400 students were enrolled in non-credit seminars and workshops. Such occasional courses have all focused upon fully-employed personnel, usually in government or business organizations. The College should consider more non-credit courses that would be useful to the individual adult, irrespective of his employment, and perhaps centering upon citizenship, community organization, and neighborhood problems.

Financial aids. This study has shown that adult students are highly motivated and earn a high level of academic success. Other studies suggest that it is necessary to provide additional encouragement for students from low socio-economic backgrounds to attend college or post-high school programs. Since many of our adult students carry family obligations, and some have reported low to modest incomes, it is probable that certain part-time students need financial aid. Although several types of aids are now available to part-time students, most are granted to full-time students only. We need to reconsider existing financial aid policy which limits financial aids just to full-time students.

Flexible admissions procedures. Adult students are often naive regarding admissions procedures in higher education. This naivete, and the high degree of academic success of current adult students, suggests that relatively flexible admissions procedures might be implemented for adult applicants. Rigid application deadlines and the advanced submission of test scores and prior academic records can serve effectively as barriers to an educational experience. We need to evaluate the usual admissions procedures and requirements in terms of how they contribute to the student's educational progress, and to eliminate or postpone those which do not, thus reducing "red tape" at initial enrollment. Other adult education centers have operated successfully with a simplified admissions procedure.

Public information. There is evidence that H.A.C.C. now provides some significant educational opportunity to adult students. However,

the writers suggest that the College provide additional information to the public about our broad range of educational services. Although counseling and advisement services now exist for adult students, there is evidence that many do not use these services. Information about counseling and career services is an important component of any program of public information, and needs to be directed to potential adult students. Any reluctance by the College to inform the public about its educational services for adults will diminish the educational opportunities which H.A.C.C. presents to the people in the Harrisburg community.

Course scheduling. For part-time students who want to pursue a course sequence in a career preparation area, we need to provide adequate course scheduling and guidance for their long-range planning. The process of individual schedule advisement and planning should interrelate closely with the construction and maintenance of the College master schedule. Such planning will enable part-time students to develop and complete academic programs over periods of from three to five years, with reasonable assurance that the College will offer the sequential courses at reasonable time intervals.

REFERENCES

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APPENDIX

HARRISBURG AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ADULT STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE
SPRING 1970

Dear Student:

We at the Harrisburg Area Community College are interested in our "adult" students and why they attend the College. In this questionnaire you are asked to provide information about yourself and your opinions of H.A.C.C. The questionnaire will be easy to answer and will require just several minutes of your time. Your responses will be grouped with those of other former students and will be considered confidential.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it as soon as possible--hopefully, within three days. A self-addressed and stamped return envelope is enclosed for your convenience in returning it.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Very truly yours,

Fred A. Snyder

Fred A. Snyder, Director
Research & Community Resources

Personal Data

Instructions. Write the appropriate number in the blank spaces on the left for each of the questions which follow.

(Please correct name, address, and social security number, if necessary.)

___1. Please indicate the location at which you currently take most of your courses with H.A.C.C.

1 H.A.C.C. campus
2 Harrisburg or Harrisburg Polyclinic Hospital
3 Mechanicsburg Naval Supply Depot
4 Carlisle Army War College
5 New Cumberland Army Depot

___2. If you are single, please note the appropriate status.

1 Self-supporting, basically.
2 Dependent upon parents or relatives for over half of my personal expenses.

___3. If you are married, please write your number of children in the blank on the left.

___4. Write the number of the educational level completed by your mother.

1 Completed 8 grades or less
2 Attended high school
3 High school graduate
4 Attended college
5 Received bachelor's degree
6 Received a master's or higher degree

___5. Write the number of the educational level completed by your father.

___6. From the list below, write the one number that best represents your present employment or student status.

1 Employed full time	6 Student part time
2 Employed part time	7 Student part time/employed part time
3 In military services	8 Unemployed
4 Housewife	9 Other (describe here) _____
5 Student full time	_____

___7. If you have noted in the previous question that you are employed full time, please indicate your present occupational category from the following list. Otherwise, do not answer this question.

1 Clerical (bank tellers, cashiers, secretaries, telephone operators, etc.)
2 Managerial and office (bank officers, buyers, purchasing agents, store managers, etc.)
3 Professional (CPA, dentist, engineer, librarian, teacher or professor, etc.)
4 Sales
5 Semiprofessional and technical (draftsmen, dental technicians, engineering technicians, surveyors, etc.)
6 Semiskilled and unskilled (assemblers, service station attendants, truck drivers, etc.)
7 Service (barbers, beauty operators, policemen, practical nurses, etc.)
8 Skilled (mechanics, machinists, bricklayers, carpenters, electricians, repairmen, welders, other tradesmen, etc.)

___8. Please indicate from the list in question #7 the occupational category you expect to be working in about 5 years from now, if you expect to be employed full time.

___9. If you are employed full time, please indicate your present salary by writing in the space on the left the appropriate number from the list shown below. Persons not employed full time should omit this question.

1 Up to $3,999	5 $7,000-7,999	8 $10,000-11,999	11 $16,000-17,999
2 $4,000-4,999	6 $8,000-8,999	9 $12,000-13,999	12 $18,000-19,999
3 $5,000-5,999	7 $9,000-9,999	10 $14,000-15,999	13 $20,000 & over
4 $6,000-6,999			

Why Do Students Attend?

10. A list of reasons why adult students might attend H.A.C.C. is shown below. Rate the importance of each reason to you by writing the appropriate number in the space on the left:

1 very important
2 some importance
3 little or no importance (or not applicable to me)

___a. Self improvement, leads to my personal satisfaction.
___b. An ideal way to use my leisure time.
___c. Primarily for fun.
___d. To meet and be with people.
___e. It is expected of me by others whom I respect.
___f. It provides a few hours escape from home each week.
___g. Primarily to take advantage of my GI benefits.
___h. Circumstances require that I prepare for job opportunities, for now or in the foreseeable future.
___i. To prepare for a better job or for more responsibility within my present occupation or field.
___j. To prepare for a new job, occupation, or field which requires education or training beyond my present experience.
___k. My present job requires that I take several courses to improve my abilities.
___l. To continue earlier college work toward an associate or a bachelor's degree.
___m. Other reason (please state briefly) _____
_____
_____

__11. Listed below are a number of possible educational goals for adult students at H.A.C.C. Write the number to indicate your primary educational goal.

__1 Earning an associate degree or a higher degree
__2 Earning a certificate to improve my employment or career skills
__3 General education or self-improvement by taking just one or several courses
__4 Clarifying my educational goals
__5 Improving my learning skills
__6 Other (specify) _____

If you are a female student or a part time (enrolled in less than 12 credits) male student, skip #12 - #14 and go on to #15.

__12. If you are a full time male student, please answer this question by writing the appropriate number in the blank at the left:

__1 I've served for one year or more in the military services, and I was discharged within 12 months prior to attending H.A.C.C.
__2 I have been employed full time for at least 12 months prior to attending H.A.C.C. (regardless of prior military service).

__13. If you noted a #1 to the previous question (#12), please rate your military service as follows: (please choose one of the two responses, even though you prefer a choice which is not shown)

__1 Basically satisfied with my military experience.
__2 Basically dissatisfied with my military experience.

__14. If you noted a #2 to question #12, please rate your prior employment as follows: (please choose one of the two responses, even though you prefer a choice which is not shown)

__1 Basically satisfied with my employment prior to attending H.A.C.C.
__2 Basically dissatisfied with my employment prior to attending H.A.C.C.

__15. We often tend to evaluate our general personal achievements in comparison to those of others our age. Please rate your feelings about your general personal achievements, in comparison to the achievements of others your age. Choose quickly between the two choices provided even though you prefer a different response.

__1 Satisfied, generally
__2 Dissatisfied, generally

__16. We also can evaluate our personal achievements in terms of our own expectations for our lives. Based upon your personal expectations, please rate your feelings about your personal achievements. Choose quickly between the two choices provided even though you prefer a different response.

__1 Satisfied, generally
__2 Dissatisfied, generally

Evaluation of H.A.C.C.

__17. Please rate your satisfaction with your personal college work and experiences at H.A.C.C. as one of the following:

__1 Superior
__2 Good
__3 Fair
__4 Poor

(continue on reverse side)

18. Please rate each aspect of the educational program and student services which you've experienced at H.A.C.C. as (1) superior, (2) good, (3) fair, (4) poor, (5) cannot rate. (Be sure to rate each of the eight aspects.)

___a. Your courses, generally
___b. Instruction, generally
___c. The library
___d. Academic advisement
___e. Advisement and assistance in employment or transfer to senior college
___f. Personal counseling
___g. Student activities
___h. Overall

___19. Do you intend to continue academic work at H.A.C.C. beyond this semester?

1 I expect to graduate this semester.
2 Yes
3 No

___20. Is there another educational institution in the general Harrisburg area at which you would have pursued your personal and educational goals, if H.A.C.C. did not exist?

1 Yes
2 No
3 Don't know

___21. Would you recommend H.A.C.C. to a person seeking to complete the same program or courses you completed or are enrolled in?

1 Yes
2 No

22. Note briefly one or more features of H.A.C.C. that you feel are outstanding.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

23. Note briefly one or more features of H.A.C.C. that you feel should be changed or improved.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

___24. Thank you for your assistance. Are you interested in seeing a copy of the results of this study?

1 Yes
2 No

* * * * * *